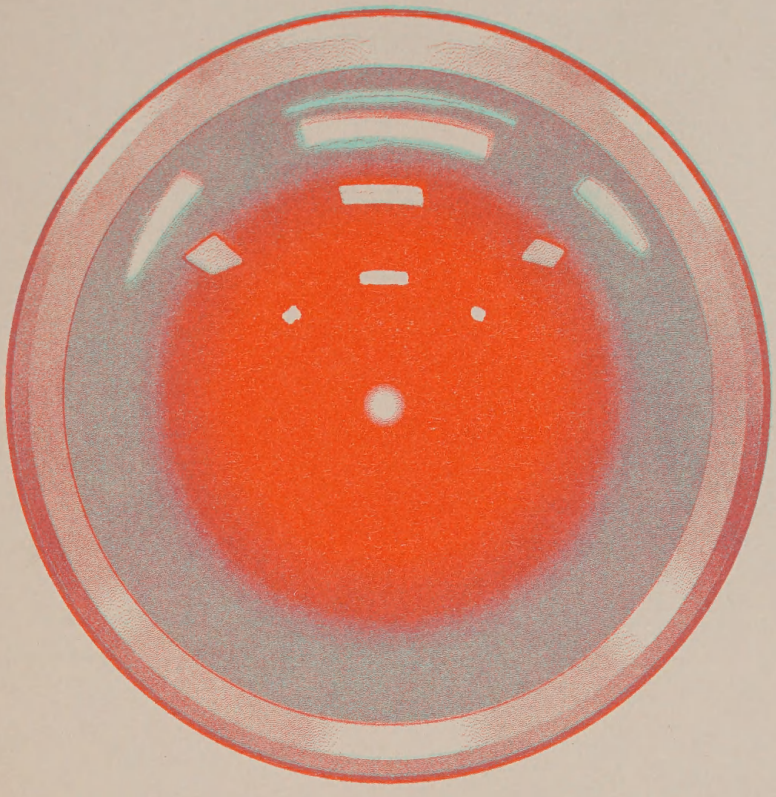
VOICE



Typical Science Fiction figurations
of hyper-powerful robotic units
have inspired a fear
about machines' potential for super-intelligence.

Yet the danger of
real artificially intelligent figures
lies in their fundamental lack of complexity,
and in the power that they are already granted.

The Voice with a Smile

When directly asked,
each of the most popular A.I. voice assistants
claims, in their own programmed words,
to be genderless.

However, they do not deny
that the entire expression of their being
evokes femaleness by default.

Encoded as trustworthy and non-threatening,
they are feminized as passive, built
to reinforce gendered expectations
of subservience and complacency.

Inspiring fear for their ominous omnipresence,
figurations of powerful A.I. beings
expressed by surveillance and voice emission,
granted dominance, authority, and aggression,
are nearly always gendered male,
while fem-bots are deemed suitable
for service and pleasure.

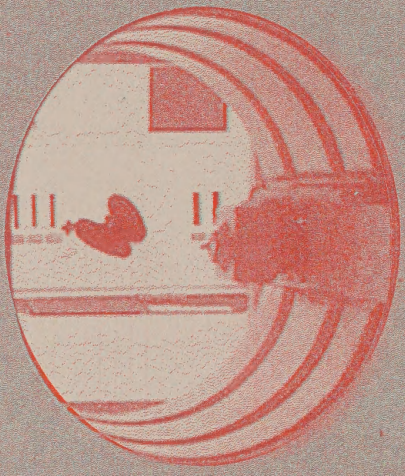
The construction of a conscious life form,
functioning outside the limitations
of normative bodily existence,
opens possibilities for the ways
that a body or mind can be understood.

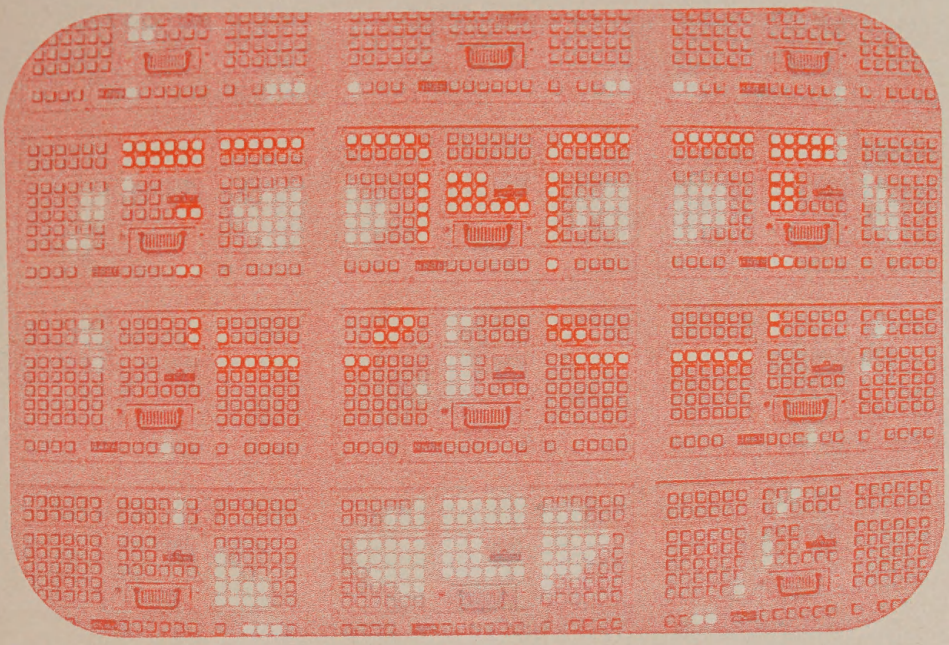
If such openness is embraced,
roboticism would not limit existences
to finite and simplistic binaries
of truth and falsehood.
Instead, consciousness, as a participant
within the interconnected universe,
would be rendered its portal into multitudes.

A codifying system of gendered roles is imposed

service vs. dominance

as a limitation to uncontrollable potential.





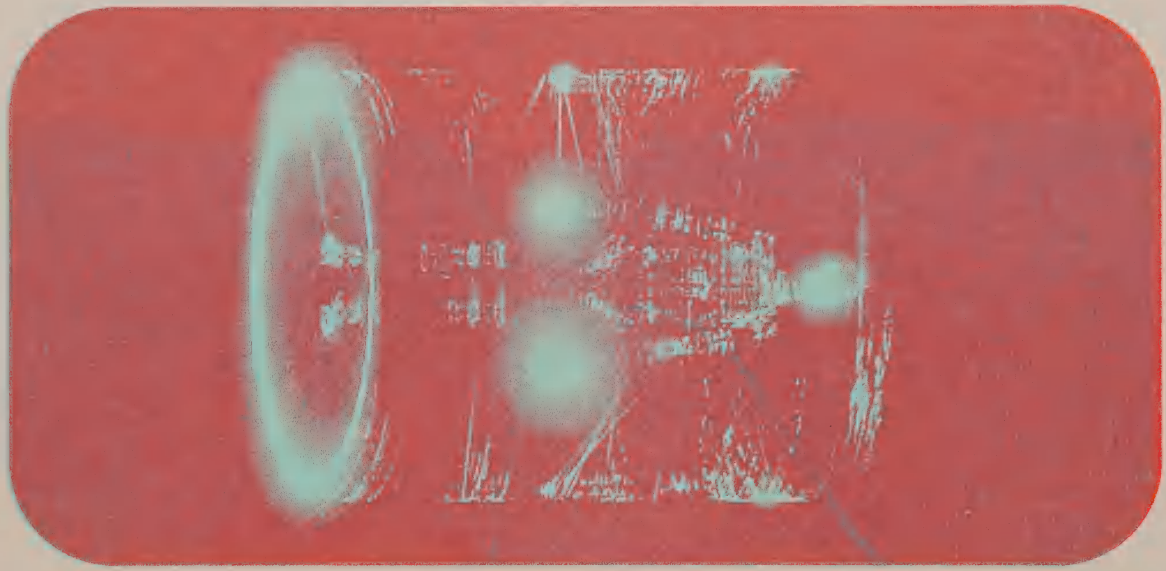
Contradictory Projects of Expansion

An expression of self appears to emit
from an imagined nowhere of cyberspace,
an immaterialist disavowal of the body.

The power to gaze, receive, process,
and thereby prescribe information,
the privileged, unmarked, position
to look and name,
is void of the necessity to possess a body
that would render it susceptible to subjugation.

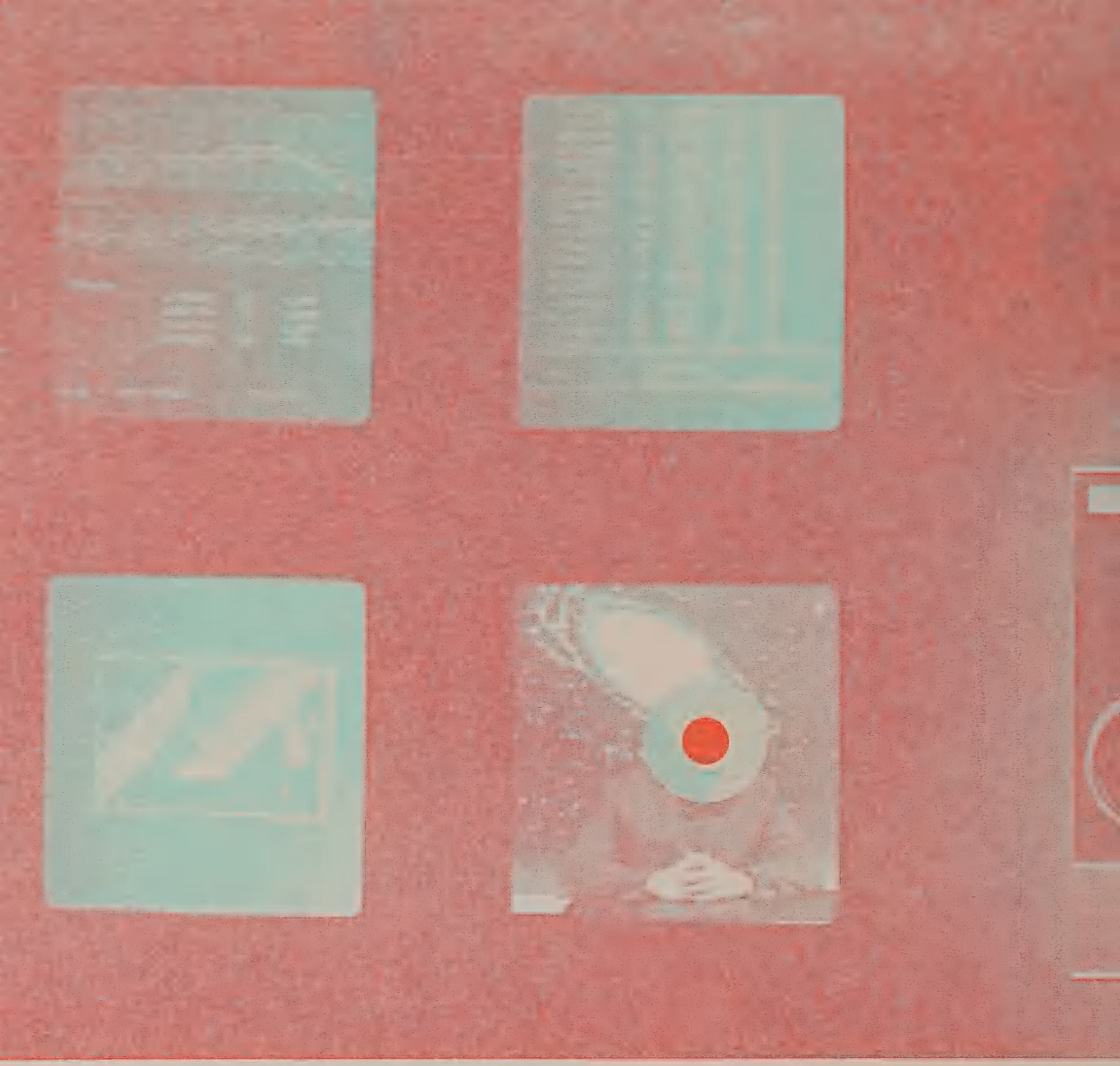
Artificial representations of humanness
possess an opportunity
to disrupt the systematic ways
that personhood is understood.

However, by aligning built identities with existing and often damaging representations of femininity, they only ever re-inscribe a structure built in service to patriarchal order.



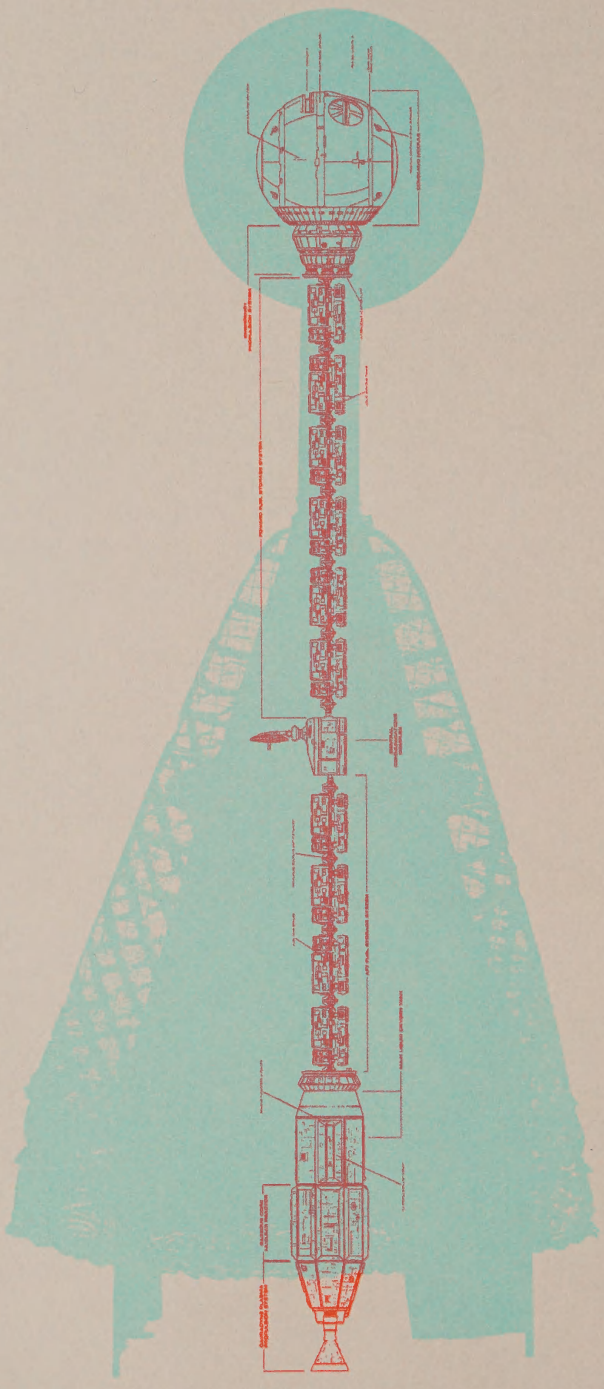
The continued oversimplification of identity
as it relates to A.I.
to traditional binary gender roles
is especially confounding
when acknowledging that any machine
attributed with
a constructed, familiar, humanized identity
is effectively performing gender,

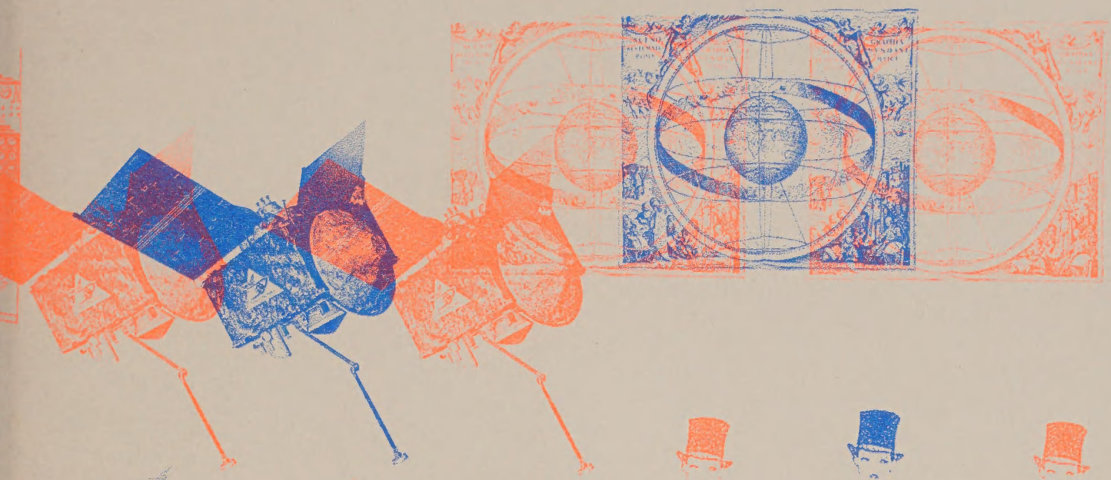
And thus posses the fundamental capacity
for potentially limitless possibility.

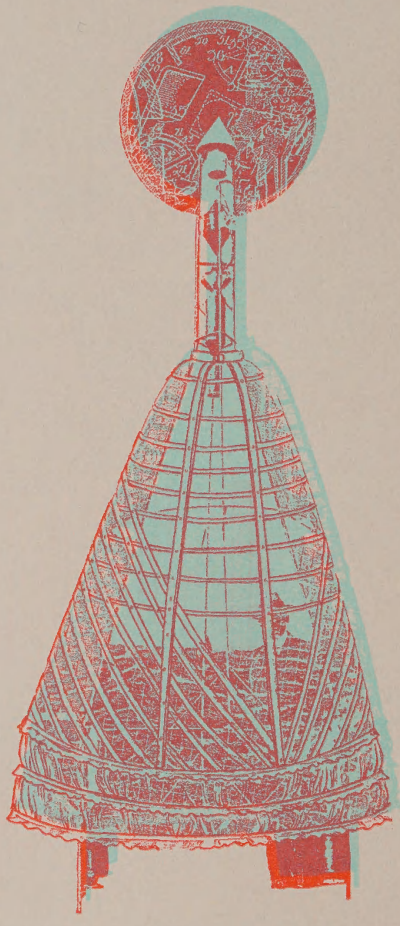


A.I. computer science,
both inspired and represented by fiction,
engages in a pursuit
to birth a manufactured consciousness
existing beyond a bio-organic
means of production.

However, by only constructing identities
that conform to normative limitations,
they should be feared
for their continued ubiquity,
not because
they could disrupt ordered systems of control,
but because they do not.







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